2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

SEPTEMBER HARVEST

When the threshing floor is heaped with ears, some people turn cows on to trample them; some people prefer to beat the heap with sticks. It depends, I expect, how many cows you have without borrowing, or how many stout arms to wield the flail. It is rather fun to see a family beating, even the children hammering away with tiny poles. The Hunzukuts are kind to their kiddies and fond of them, but have happily no time to spoil them, and as the children have always something new and interesting to do they are very rarely troublesome. If they are, some grown-up will give them a mild smack on the head (the little cap prevents its hurting much) and all is well again. If a child is sick they carry it out with them to the fields (no one can be spared to stay at home to mind it) and chuck a cloth over it to keep the flies off, and let it lie there in peace till it feels better. The youngsters work just as long as they feel interested, then fade away and play for a bit, and join another group and work a while again. There seems to be no attempt to force them or even overtly to encourage them. Their own instinct is to copy the grown-ups or next-older brother. Yet the sense of responsibility wakes early; a five- or six-year-old is often in charge of the two-year-old toddler, rejoices in steadying him as he tries to walk or in mounting him on the shoulders to cross a water-channel or climb a wall. We used sometimes to feel a little anxious about the baby's fate, but its mother never did. I have never heard a Hunza mother shout "Don't do that, darling," or "Take care, you'll drop the baby," or "Don't go so near the edge, you'll fall." Hunza consists of "edges"—the house-roof, the field, the reservoir, the cliff—and no doubt Nature in the course of centuries has weeded out the stocks that lose their balance. Our occasional solicitude was the cause of much merriment; we could not always suppress a "Take care, you'll slip," and this became a standing joke amongst our smaller friends. If all other conversation failed a jesting cry from someone of "Take care, Mother, you'll fall" would set the ball rolling again. Jolly little scamps they are, and pleasant companions for a walk. I counted seven in front and three behind me one day, all between five and seven, with two or three babies mounted on the others'

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

boulders, and gaunt tree-skeletons amidst which the cubes of stone-and-mud houses were indistinguishable save for the thin spiral of blue smoke that rose from their flat roofs at feeding time.

We were able to work on indoors, for informants were glad enough to come and sit by our fire and tell all they knew about any question asked, but we sorely missed the cheering chance encounters, the casual wayside chats that normally brightened our walks.

Indoors during the Great Cold the family is merry and happy enough. The recurrent tiny fire, whose ashes never quite grow cold and which is stirred into life at baking time, reinforced by human heat and not squandered by wanton draughts, keeps sufficient warmth alive for comfort, and the weeks of enforced leisure from outdoor work are thoroughly enjoyed. The women spin and sew and bake and tend the babies; the men mend and make their various implements; the children eagerly demand the right to help in every job for which they are ripe, while the old people come into their own and entertain the company by telling tales of every kind; not only nor even mainly tales of heroes and of kings, of raiding chiefs and bandit exploits from the good old days before the Serkár brought peace and security at the cost of adventure, nor folklore yarns borrowed from other times and climes—though they have good store of these; but the history of their country and its clans and anecdotes of every day. In this homely school the Hunza child learns all that it needs to know, the elements of ethics, morals, and religion, the accepted codes of decent behaviour, and all the accumulated wisdom of the land.

The Hunzukuts have no artistic gift of story-telling, and no professional story-tellers; they have no oral literature to match the Sagas of the North or the Persian wealth of the Thousand and One Nights, but they can tell a straightforward story simply and well and with considerable humour, and the phrases in which their yarns are couched have become sanctified and semi-stereotyped by frequent repetition. Some of these DL had recorded in 1923–24, and they were already in print when we returned to Hunza ten years later. We were surprised and

4: Lorimer L-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1935 AV7 Burusho AV7

the lighting of lamps, between supper and bedtime, in recounting past events, and doubtless in confirming and explaining traditional behaviour and practices:

> šapi·k ši·mtsum gučaǰpal xa (I am told) geri·tsa geri-bilumišo ya dapiŋ stašo huru·šav·n. Thamini te·ndili gereŋtsa aka·birtiŋ huru·šam da šajara (= šajara = ta·ri·x) ečam.

"From eating food till lying-down time those who had lamps or those who were preparing wool for spinning used to sit "by the lamp." In former years the people of the upper class used to sit by their lamps and recount past events."

That these séances had an educative and moral intention is evident from the saying, ascribed by tradition to Big Ali of the Ghulwāting clan:

> Ghulwaṭiŋa Big Ali.a bor bila: "uyo·n ja geri·tsor du·n ja·tsum sisku§ (= insa·ni.at) haki·bav·n. Ja khu γuniki.ents ayu· γuniki.entsa gore·ŋtsor ničav·n."

"There is the saying of Big Ali of the Ghulwāting: 'All people have come to my lamp-side and have learnt from me human virtue. Only these evil sons of mine go to the lamp-sides of evil persons."

The few remarks I have to make about the provenance of the subject matter of the texts are embodied in the notes subjoined to each. Otherwise the notes are chiefly confined to grammatical queries and explanations. Paragraph numbers quoted in the notes refer to the Grammar. Obviously the texts, especially those relating to local traditions or customs, require much fuller annotation to reveal and explain their full content; but lack of knowledge, no less than lack of space, made it impossible for me to attempt such annotation.

I hope that my present investigations in Hunza may serve to throw light on many of such obscurities.

Aliabad, Hunza,
29th October 1934.

D. L. R. L.

[p.1 contains no textual material – Analyst]